

**Minutes of the 5th meeting of the sub regional steering committee for  
MIKE East Africa**

**23rd -24th February 2010  
Dar es salaam, Tanzania**

**1. Welcome speech by the chairman (Tanzania):**

The Director of Wildlife Division, Mr. Erasmus Tarimo as the chairman of the meeting, called the meeting to order at 8:45am. He welcomed everybody and requested participants to introduce themselves.

In his opening remarks, Mr. Tarimo recognized the importance of elephant management and conservation in the region.

**2. Adoption of the Agenda:**

The provisional agenda was adopted with a minor change to bring forward agenda item on cop 15 issues to be discussed before country reports.

**3. Review of actions from the previous meeting:**

The SSC noted the minutes and the chairman requested that a provision for signing off the minutes be included at the end of the minutes for authentication.

Kenya requested Tanzania to step up the issue of collaboration regarding the trans-boundary Mkomazi MIKE site.

Regarding the Mt.Elgon Population Survey, the Sub regional Support Officer informed the meeting that this had been a top priority but had not been done because of communication breakdown with DNA analysis experts. Kenya re-iterated the importance of conducting that survey to which the SSO agreed.

The SSO observed the alarming rate of staff turnover within MIKE sites which affects continuity of MIKE work.

He suggested that MIKE positions be formalized by the range states, and have MIKE's activities be included in the TORs for the National and Sites officers to be able to attach importance to the position.

The Chair of the meeting further suggested awareness of top leadership in Wildlife Institutions to avoid turnover. The Chair further advised to think about the institutional arrangements and also put a focal person for spearheading MIKE activities.

#### **4. MIKE Programme Update:**

The Sub regional Support officer for MIKE East Africa discussed the implementation of the MIKE programme in the region. The presentation reflected on the issues brought up at the previous 4<sup>th</sup> steering committee meeting held in Kigali, Rwanda in September 2008 and highlighted details on what the programme had done in order to address the needs and issues brought up at the previous meeting. These were broadly categorized as:

- Staff turnover;
- Integrating MIKE curriculum into Wildlife training courses;
- Operationally large and challenging areas

The Sub region Steering Committee appreciated the update by the Sub region Support Officer and the general conclusions were valued.

The SSC encouraged the SSO to undertake the survey of Mt. Elgon MIKE sites with Kenya pledging its full support in doing the population survey for MIKE site.

The SSC noted and appreciated the need for different countries to adopt different strategies for reducing staff turnover for MIKE staff like training as many staff as possible such that even when any staff is transferred, work in MIKE sites can still go on seamlessly.

Tanzania suggested ways to improve MIKE operations in Selous and Rungwa/Ruaha by assigning assistant MIKE Site officers.

#### **5. CITES CoP 15 issues relevant to Africa:**

The Sub regional Steering Committee noted the presentation by the MIKE coordinator, Mr. Tom De Meulenaer.

The meeting discussed the status of the African Elephant action Plan and the African Elephant Fund, and the actions being taken to conclude and operationalize them. It was agreed that CoP15 offered good opportunities to conclude the action plan.

Uganda proposed to the SSC that the proposals for Zambia, Kenya and Tanzania be presented for consideration at the next meeting of the Governing Council of Ministers at the East African Community in Arusha, Tanzania.

With regard to participation in CoP 15, Uganda recommended that the CITES secretariat embeds in its criteria for hosting CoPs the issue of **NOT** forcing Parties to confirm hotel bookings by use of credit cards.

#### **6. Country reports:**

Each country gave a presentation on the progress of implementation of the MIKE programme for each of its sites; the status of the staff and the resources at the site level; elephant population surveys; training needs; and challenges faced in the implementation of MIKE activities.

The Sub regional Steering Committee appreciated the interesting country reports.

**i. Eritrea**

Eritrea's country presentation was done by Mr. Yacob Yohannes, the MIKE National Officer. He reported that generally, there is no poaching going on in the areas designated as MIKE sites in Eritrea, but that the commonest cause of elephant mortality is due to human elephants conflicts or in protection of human life. Since 2003, 39 elephants had died through drowning in human dug water wells. Eritrea's report was appreciated by the SSC.

Eritrea further reported that the following achievements had been registered:

- 142 wildlife scouts have been recruited, trained and deployed in the country's six regions;
- The heads of each of the six regions had received 2 mobile phones to facilitate communication with the HQ and regions;
- Budget has been allocated for one year for mobile Sim cards for each region
- In 2010 there is plan to recruit and train additional 50 wildlife scouts
- The Government of Eritrea is now working hard to conserve wildlife in general and elephants in particular,
- Land use plan is being developed in the Gash-Barka region,
- A land has been allocated for the conservation of elephants in the south-western part of the country between the Gash and Setit Rivers and would be designated a protected area.

**Assistance Required**

- Training and capacity building especially for the new MIKE site officer;
- Updated computers;
- Equipment like GPSs, binoculars, digital camera, etc. for conducting surveys;
- Assistance for finalizing the creation of elephant protected area in Gash-Setit
- Financial assistance in conducting field surveys, collecting MIKE data and communication with the sub-regional support officer.

**ii. Kenya**

Kenya's country presentation was provided by Mr. Moses Litoroh, the MIKE National officer, who reported an upsurge in poaching threats- stretching their resources including the manpower. He also reported that they are challenged by lack of funds to carry out continuous surveys, procure equipment and a very large area to be covered (possibility of missing carcasses)

Mr. Litoroh reported that Kenya was planning to complete the ranger training in Tsavo, Train security rangers in all MIKE sites in MIST, roll out MIST, conduct survey of Mt Elgon and procure computers.

Kenya's report was appreciated by the Sub regional Steering Committee. The Sub regional Support Unit agreed to make the survey of Mt. Elgon a top priority with Kenya confirming its commitment to complete deployment of MIST in all its sites with technical assistance from MIKE.

### **iii. Tanzania**

Tanzania's country presentation was made by Ms. Lowaeli Damalu, the MIKE National officer. She reported that five MIKE officers had been trained on MIKE Program, elephant survey and MIST database; In addition, 26 senior wildlife officers had received demonstration on MIST database.

She further reported that the elephant poaching had increased and Tanzania was facing challenges with what and how to maintain a big ivory stockpile at the Tanzania Wildlife Division.

She also brought to the attention of the meeting that Tanzania was planning to launch MIST database with support from MIKE Sub regional Support Office, procure more field equipments especially GPS, conduct capacity building for staff in MIKE sites on data collection and management, equipping and training field patrol units on the use of computers and deliver appropriate programmes in data management.

Tanzania also planned to carry out more collaboration with other Law Enforcement and conservation agencies/private companies and conduct inter agencies awareness training workshop.

The Sub regional Steering Committee took note of Tanzania's presentation and requested Tanzania to crosscheck discrepancies in the population survey results for Selous. Tanzania committed to cooperate with Kenya to deploy MIKE in Mkomazi.

### **iv. Uganda**

Uganda's country presentation was provided by Mr. Samuel Mwandha, the Director Conservation, Uganda Wild Life Authority and the MIKE national officer. In his presentation, he informed the meeting that populations of elephants have been increasing over the years and that poaching and natural death are the main causes of mortality for the elephant populations. Poaching/illegal killing continuing to be a challenge for management

Uganda has not had any deaths resulting out of human-wildlife conflicts in the last five years, though these conflicts do occur. He reported that over the past few years Uganda has seen an increase in elephant deaths especially in Queen Elizabeth National Park.

Mr. Mwandha further reported that Uganda was planning to do a survey of the Queen Elizabeth for large mammal populations including elephants in June/July 2010. Uganda would undertake necessary intelligence and surveillance measures to break the new cycle of poaching currently going on around in Queen Elizabeth. Collaboration with neighboring states to break cycle of illegal killing was the next step.

The Sub regional Steering Committee appreciated Uganda's report and the role of MIKE in supporting conservation of elephants.

The Sub regional Steering Committee requested that Range-states should make it clear on where they want to go with MIKE and the need to link MIKE with African Elephant Action Plan.

#### **7. Reactions and review of country reports**

The SSC appreciated the different and interesting reports and encouraged the SSO to note the key elements there-in.

#### **8. New MIKE sites:**

The Sub regional Steering Committee noted and appreciated the presentation on criteria for new MIKE sites.

The Sub regional Steering Committee encouraged MIKE to invite Ethiopia and start implementing MIKE in Babile elephant sanctuary and Kefra shiraro national park. The Sub regional Support Unit was encouraged to help Ethiopia raising funding for equipping these sites.

The Sub regional Steering Committee urged MIKE to contact Sudan delegation at the CoP 15 meeting in Doha so as to initiate dialogue on Sudan's plans to engage in implementing MIKE.

#### **8. Work plan and priorities for 2010:**

The Sub regional Steering Committee noted and agreed with the work plan and priorities for 2010 which were presented by the Sub regional Support officer. Uganda suggested that during the survey of Mt Elgon, both the Uganda and Kenya side should be considered in order to give the true ecosystem picture. MIKE agreed to the above suggestion. The Gash Setit site in Eritrea could be surveyed next.

Kenya urged MIKE to work with countries in coming up with harmonized work plans.

**9. MIKE analysis for CoP 15:**

The meeting appreciated the MIKE analysis for CoP 15 which was done by Mr. Tom De Meulenaer.

Uganda stressed the importance of circulation of such reports prior to meetings, to which the Central Coordinating Unit agreed. The Sub regional Steering Committee encouraged MIKE to develop national analytical reports and discuss their implications at national levels.

The meeting stressed the importance of having internal mechanisms for validation of data before analysis.

The Sub regional Steering Committee also suggested to MIKE to flag any findings to range-states that may attract attention of the global community.

**10. ETIS analysis for CoP 15:**

The interesting and detailed presentation of ETIS was noted and appreciated by the Sub regional Steering Committee. Mr. Tom Milliken, the Director of TRAFFIC/ETIS highlighted the major drivers of illicit trade in ivory.

**11. AOB**

None

**12. Determination of venue and chair of the next meeting**

The issue was discussed and Kenya was agreed as the next venue and chair of the next meeting. The Chair suggested that the next meeting should take place in a MIKE site.

**13. Closing remarks**

The Chair requested Kenya to give a short closing remark which was done by Moses Litoroh.

Mr. Litoroh thanked MIKE for organizing the meeting and underscored the fact that MIKE had helped Range-States in achieving some important milestones in elephant conservation and for the support extended to range-states towards effective management of their elephant populations.

He thanked participants and government of Tanzania for hosting the next meeting.

The MIKE Coordinator appreciated the importance of the participants of the meeting and thanked Tanzania for hosting and chairing the meeting. The director of Traffic was thanked for endeavoring to come and give a technical presentation of the ETIS findings to the SSC meeting.

Recorded by  
Alex Tumushabe  
Admin Asst  
CITESMIKE PROGRAMM

Affirmed by  
Edison Nuwamanya  
Sub regional Support Officer, Eastern Africa

Confirmed by  
Mr. Erasmus Tarimo  
Chairman

**ANNEX 1**

**ATTENDENCE**

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Country</b>	<b>Institution</b>	<b>Email</b>
1	Tom De Meulenaer		CCU	
2	Edison Nuwamanya		CITESMIKE programme	edisonnuwamanya@citesmike.org
3	Alex Tumushabe		CITESMIKE Programme	alextumushabe@citesmike.org
4	Tom Milliken		TRAFFIC East/Southern Africa	Milliken@wwfsarpo.org
5	Justus Tindigarukayo	Uganda	Directorate of Tourism, Wildlife and Museums	jtindigarukayo@mtti.go.ug
6	Sam Mwandha	Uganda	Uganda Wildlife Authority	sam.mwandha@ugandawildlife.org
7	Samuel M. Kasiki	Kenya	KWS	skasiki@kws.go.ke
8	Moses Litoroh	Kenya	KWS	mlitoroh@kws.go.ke
9	Yacob Yohannes	Eritrea	Eritrea	yohannesyacob@mail.com
10	Erasmus M. Tarimo	Tanzania	Tanzania Wildlife Division	director@wildlife.go.tz
11	Midala, BMCM	Tanzania	Tanzania Wildlife Division	director@wildlife.go.tz
12	Lowaeli Damalu	Tanzania	Tanzania Wildlife Division	Lowaeli@gmail.com
13	John Kaaya	Tanzania	Tanzania Wildlife Division	director@wildlife.go.tz
14	Mabula Misungwy	Tanzania	Tanzania Wildlife Division	director@wildlife.go.tz